

CLAIMS

1. A method of screening for an agonist antibody, which comprises the steps of:
 - (a) determining the binding activity of a test antibody and selecting an antibody with
5 binding activity;
 - (b) modifying the antibody selected in step (a); and
 - (c) determining the agonistic activity of the modified antibody of step (b) and selecting
an antibody with agonistic activity.
2. The screening method of claim 1, wherein the modified antibody is a minibody.
- 10 3. The screening method of claim 2, wherein the minibody is an sc(Fv)2.
4. The screening method of any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the agonistic activity is
not determined prior to modifying the test antibody.
5. The screening method of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the antibody is one against
a protein expressed on a cell membrane.
- 15 6. An antibody obtained by the method of any one of claims 1 to 5.
7. A method for producing an antibody with agonistic activity, which comprises the
steps of:
 - (a) determining the binding activity of an antibody and selecting an antibody with
binding activity;
 - 20 (b) modifying the antibody selected in step (a);
 - (c) determining the agonistic activity of the modified antibody of step (b) and selecting
an antibody with agonistic activity;
 - (d) introducing a host cell with a vector carrying a DNA that encodes the antibody
selected in step (c); and
 - 25 (e) culturing the host cell of step (d).
8. The production method of claim 7, wherein the modified antibody is a minibody.
9. The production method of claim 8, wherein the minibody is an sc(Fv)2.
10. The production method of any one of claims 7 to 9, wherein the agonistic activity is
not determined prior to antibody modification.
- 30 11. The production method of any one of claims 7 to 10, wherein the antibody is one
against a protein expressed on a cell membrane.
12. A method of screening for an agonist antibody, wherein the agonistic activity of a
test antibody is not determined prior to step (a), and which comprises the steps of:
 - (a) modifying a test antibody; and
 - 35 (b) determining the agonistic activity of the modified antibody of step (a) and selecting
an antibody with agonistic activity.

13. The screening method of claim 12, wherein the modified antibody is a minibody.
14. The screening method of claim 13, wherein the minibody is an sc(Fv)₂.